

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 DHA-02 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00  
AID-05 IGA-02 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07  
NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 /058 W  
-----280849Z 082697 /21

R 271500Z MAY 77  
FM AMEMBASSY COTONOU  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9738  
INFO USMISSION USUN NY

C O N F I D E N T I A L COTONOU 0941

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, EAID, SHUM, DM, IBRD  
SUBJ3 BENIN AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSOC-  
IATION

REF: STATE 122029

1. COUNSELOR BENINESE FOREIGN MINISTRY DEPARTMENT TWO APN.  
AMERICAN AFFAIRS) KOUKOU TELEPHONED ME LATE MAY 25 REQUESTES  
ABSTENTION ON BENIN LOANS IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION  
(IDA). HE SAID FOREIGN MINISTRY COULD FIND NO REFERENCE TO  
THE IDA LOANS FOR DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AND FEEDER ROADS, AND  
DUE TO COMMUNICATIONS DIFFICULTIES KZKF NOT YET OBTAINED  
INFORMATION FROM OTHER MINISTRIES WHICH MIGHT BE INVOLVED (E.E.  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND EQUIPMENT). WE SENT AIDE MEMOIRE PREPARED  
ON BASIS TALKING POINTS MAY 26.

2. ASSUMING (CORRECTLY IT TURNED OUT) THAT COMMUNICATIONS  
WITHIN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY ARE AS POOR AS BETWEEN MINISTRIES,  
I CALLED ON DEPT FOUR (INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS) DIRECTOR SOGLO  
MAY 27 TO GIVE HIM COPY OF AIDE MEMOIRE AND SEEK HIS REACTION.  
SOGLO, WHO HAD NOT BEEN INFORMED OF DEMARCHE, READ AIDE MEMOIRE  
AND EXPRESSED SURPRISE THAT THE US WOULD TAKE SUCH A STEP WITHOUT  
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EXTENSIVE PRIOR CONSULTATIONS IN WASHINGTON AND COTONOU. WHEN  
I NOTED THAT QUESTION HAD BEEN DISCUSSED BY DEPUTY ASSISTANT  
SECRETARY SEELEY AND AMB BOYA ON MAY 12, SOGLO SAID THAT INFO  
HAD NOT BEEN PASSED TO HIS DEPARTMENT.

3. IN SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSION, SOGLO SAID THAT ALTHOUGH GOVERN-  
MENT WOULD HAVE TO STUDY QUESTION CAREFULLY, HIS OWN INITIAL  
REACTION WAS ONE OF PUZZLEMENT. HE ASKED WHICH VIOLATIONS

OF HUMAN RIGHTS US WAS REFERRING TO, AS WELL AS THE SOURCE AND NATURE OF THE DATA UPON WHICH US WAS BASING ITS DETERMINATION. HE FELT THAT REFERENCE TO ARBITRARY ARRESTS WITHOUT SUPPORTING DATA WAS TOO VAGUE A BASIS ON WHICH TO TAKE SUCH A SUDDEN AND STRONG STAND. FURTHERMORE, HE ASKED WHAT ACTION THE US WANTED BENIN TO TAKE, POINTING OUT THAT ANY RECENT ARRESTS HAD BEEN MADE IN CONNECTION WITH AN ARMED ATTACK AIMED AT DESTROYING THE GOVERNMENT.

4. IN RESPONSE I NOTED THAT BENIN HAD BEEN CRITICIZED IN 1976 BY AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL FOR ARRESTS AND ILL TREATMENT OF POLITICAL PRISONERS, AND THAT JOURNALISTIC REPORTS BASED APPARENTLY ON EYE WITNESS INTERVIEWS CONCERNING THE AFTERMATH OF THE MERCENARY ATTACK HAD MENTIONED ARRESTS. MOREOVER, WE WERE AWARE OURSELVES OF INSTANCES OF FOREIGNERS AS WELL AS BENINESE BEING ARRESTED AND HELD IN PRISON WITHOUT BEING CHARGED. I STRESSED THAT CARTER ADMINISTRATION HAD TAKEN UNEQUIVOCAL STAND ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTENDED TO WORK FOR THEIR SAFEGUARDING IN ALL COUNTRIES. I SUGGESTED THAT IF THE BENINESE GOVERNMENT FELT IT WAS BEING UNJUSTLY CRITICIZED, IT SHOULD SAY WHY.

5. SOGLO SAID THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO STUDY THE SITUATION BEFORE HE COULD MAKE FURTHER COMMENTS. HE DID NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT ONE OF MAJOR GOALS OF BENINESE REVOLUTION IS TO DEVELOP THE COUNTRY IN ORDER TO IMPROVE LIFE OF THE PEOPLE, INCLUDING HUMAN RIGHTS. HE HOPED THAT INTERNAL CONDITIONS IN BENIN WOULD PERMIT RELAXATION OF EMERGENCY MEASURES SO THAT PROGRESS COULD BE MADE IN DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTING NEW  
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DRAFT FUNDAMENTAL LAW. HE PROMISED TO CONTACT ME AS SOON AS HE WAS IN POSITION TO GIVE ME AN OFFICIAL REACTION.  
THOMPSON

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
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**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**TAGS:** PFOR, EAID, SHUM, DM, US, IBRD, IDA  
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**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009